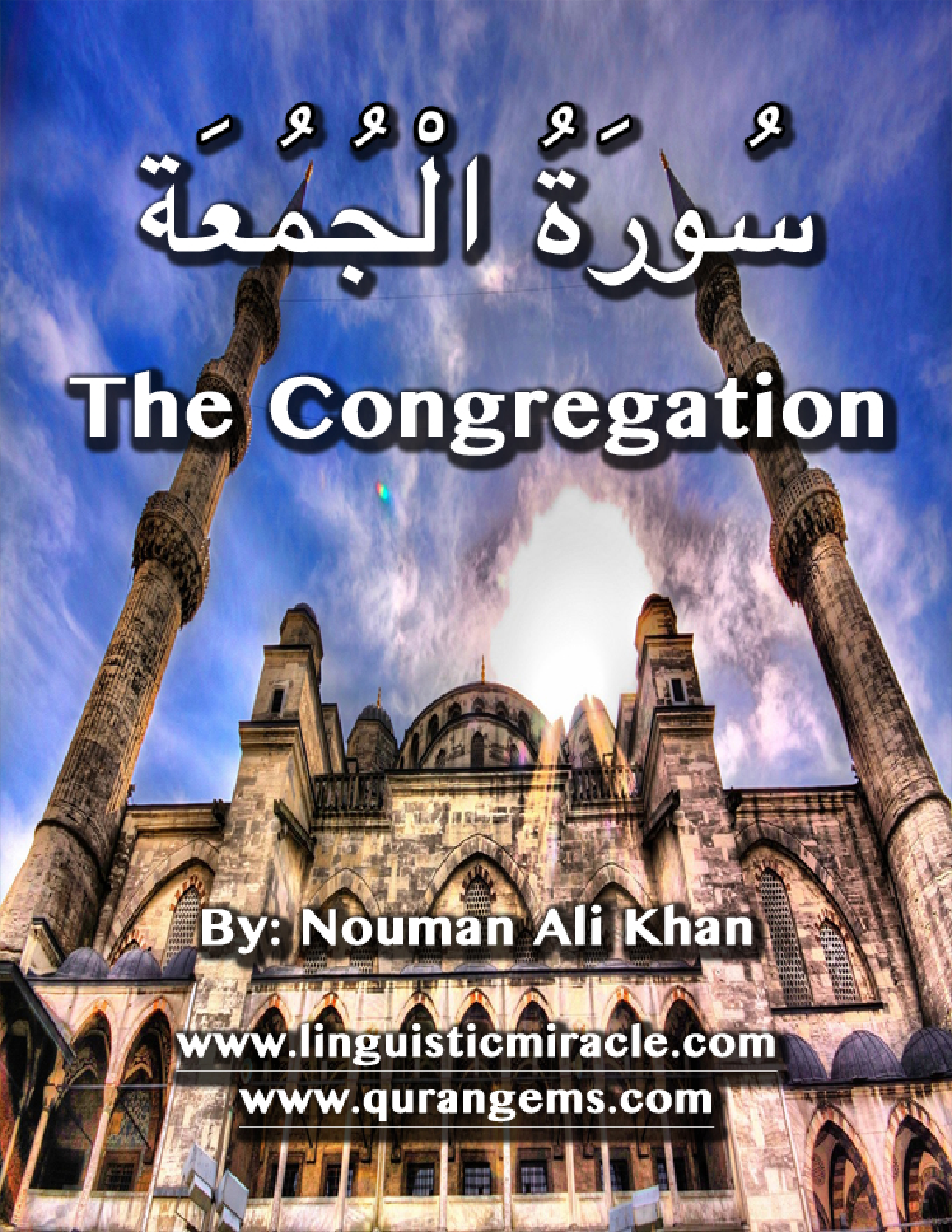


سُورَةُ الْجُمُعَةَ

The Congregation

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The compilation of this work is an attempt to document the linguistic definitions of words and verbs, some tafseer commentary, and the translation done by our brother in Islaam, Nouman Ali Khan in his Quran cover to cover project done at the Bayyinah Institute. It is highly recommended to couple this PDF with watching the videos on Bayyinah T.V. to attain maximum benefit.

سُورَةُ الْجُمُعَة

Surah Al-Juma'ah summarises the struggles of the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم in a very comprehensive way. *Surah Al-Saff* deals with the mission that ALLAH sent the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم with and what the end goal was. ALLAH will complete HIS Light and this will be achieved through the

Deen HE sends with HIS final Messenger. How he will accomplish that goal is articulated in this *Surah*.

The name of this *Surah* comes from the final passage, the only passage in the Quran which refers to the Friday prayer and the ethics of the Friday prayer. The central *Ayah* of this surah is the second *Ayah*. Everything in this surah revolves around the second ayah of this *Surah*. This extra emphasis on *Juma'ah* at the end tells us in what the Messenger

صلّى الله عليه و سلّم had to do and the mission he had to accomplish. *Juma'ah* had a very strategic importance. The congregation itself, plays a big role in aiding the accomplishment of the Prophet's صلّى الله عليه و سلّم mission.

This Surah is also known as one of the *Musabihat*.

Ayah 1

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلْمَلِكِ ٱلْقُدُّوسِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْحَكِيمِ ١

Muhsin Khan

Whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth glorifies Allah, the King (of everything), the Holy, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Nouman Ali Khan

Whatever is in the skies and whatever is in the Earth continues to declare the perfection of ALLAH, The Sovereign, The Inherently Pure, The Possessor of Respect and Authority [and] the Permanent Ruler, The All-Wise.

The use of the word مَا in these particular *Ayat* is for the purpose of referring to that which is unknown. There are so many things in the skies and on Earth that we are aware of. However, there are also many things that exist in these realms that we do not know about. When مَا is used it is talking about that which is not known. If these things were known the word الَّذِي would have been used. مَا is used to suggest that there are so many things that we do not know about in the skies and on Earth. All of it, that which we are aware of and those things which are unknown to us, all are continuously declaring ALLAH's perfection.

This *Surah* is unique because usually the *Fawasil* (the term used for the endings of *Ayat*. The *Fawasil* usually have two Names of ALLAH. This *Fasilah* is unique in that it comprises of four Names of ALLAH: **الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ اَلْعَزِيزِالْحَكِيمِ**. This is curious as it is not usually the case in the Quran that ALLAH will mention four Names instead of two at the end of an *Ayah*.

الْمَلِكِ – the Arabic word for 'the sovereign'. This is different to **مَالك** – which means owner. **مَالك** is a micro term and **الْمَلِكِ** is a macro term. An owner has the potential to possess something but not have sovereignty over it. For example, one might own a marker but that does not mean they are the sovereign of that marker. It would not make sense because to be a king you must be in possession of large territory. **اَلْمَلِكِ** is used in grand terms

where as مَالك is used in the smallest terms. For example, one might own a car but they are not the king of the car.

The word sovereign has several implications. There are very clear indications and signs that one is in a kingdom. For example, buildings with posters of the king or department stores named after the king. In some Arab countries you are legally obligated to have an image of the king inside the store. This is a show of loyalty. In a kingdom, it is very important for a king to know that you are displaying loyalty. The perception of loyalty is what is important regardless of whether you are actually showing loyalty to the king. In societies that have kingdoms there are necessarily signs of kingship. Previously, if one entered a kingdom and was unaware that they had just entered another kingdom, the first thing they would notice are the flags, monuments, statues, names of the king, soldiers bearing his mark – these are all signs of a king. Keep this in mind as we continue on with the *Tafsir* of this *Surah*.

الْقُدُّوسِ – comes from the word قُدس which means purity. It is used specifically in the sense of spiritual purity. It is different from *Tazkiya* or *Zakat* which also means purity. *Zakat* is purity that is attained. In other words, you weren't pure and then you achieved *Zakat*. We give *Zakat* on our money because until we give it, the money is not pure. We engage in the act of *Tazkiya* because without it we are impure. *Tazkiya* therefore cleanses us. For example, good deeds are a form of *Tazkiya*. قُدس is something that is inherently pure in and of itself. It was not purified nor did it go through a process of purification. The verb that comes from it is from the *taf'3il* form: *qadasa/uqadisu/taqdees*. *Taqdees* is to declare or acknowledge that something is inherently pure. It is not to purify something. In other words, it was always pure you just did not acknowledge it.

ALLAH is الْقُدُّوسِ – this is one of the forms of *Mubalagha* – the extremely, the incredibly, the inherently pure. Some

imply from this in *Tafsir* literature, the source of all purity. Everything that we know of that is pure in the world, is sourced in ALLAH HIMSELF.

Some of the benefits of the word **الْقُدُّوسِ**:

The source of purity for us, physically in the world, is water. Water is a purifier. You attain purity by taking a shower, or making *Wudu*, etc. The sanctified *A'rsh* [Throne] of ALLAH is on water.

The more one declares ALLAH's Purity, the more you cleanse your concept of who ALLAH is. You acknowledge that ALLAH is free from all impurities – impurities also implies flaws. The more you do that, the more purified you become.

The Holy lands are also referred to as **اَلْقُدْس**. The reason is they are inherently pure lands. ALLAH has chosen them to be that way.

اَلْعَزِيزِ – The Ultimate Authority. It is comprised of two meanings. In some translations, عَزِيزٌ is translated as The Mighty or The Powerful which is actually اَلْقَوِيُّ. اَلْعَزِيزُ combines two things: respect and authority. It is possible for an individual to have authority but have no respect. It is also possible that someone is respectful and respected by others but possesses no authority. اَلْعَزِيزُ necessarily implies someone who possesses authority and at the same time commands respect. People in authority are usually the subject of a lot of criticism and if they are respected it is almost forced. One who is truly عَزِيزٌ, despite the authority they have and the position of criticism they are in they are still commanding people's respect.

اَلْحَكِيمِ – The Wise/the Source of All Wisdom. Like اَلْعَزِيزُ this is *fa3'il*. They are *ism sifa* which means they are constants – the One Permanently Worthy of Respect and

Permanently in a Position of Authority and the All-Wise. *Hakim* means ruler – not just wise. Therefore, it implies one who has constant Rule and the Possessor of Constant Wisdom.

The first Ayah is about ALLAH HIMSELF. The next Ayah is about the Messenger صلّى الله عليه و سلّم.

Ayah 2

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى بَعَثَ فِى ٱلْأُمِّيِّـۧنَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا۟ مِن قَبْلُ لَفِى ضَلَـٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ٢

Muhsin Khan

He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (this Quran, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and Al-Hikmah (As-Sunnah: legal ways, orders, acts of worship, etc. of Prophet Muhammad SAW). And verily, they had been before in mainfest error;

Nouman Ali Khan

HE is the ONE who has appointed [raised] from among those who cannot read [unlettered] a Messenger belonging to them, [a Messenger from among themselves], he reads onto them HIS miraculous Ayat, and it purifies them and then he teaches them

Book and wisdom. Even though much before, they were in clear misguidance.

This also makes this *Surah* unique among the *Musabihat*. In a number of these *Surahs* ALLAH begins by mentioning something about the universe and then HE continues by criticising something about humanity or HE makes a demand from humanity that they are not really fulfilling. For example, in *Surah Al-Hadid*, there were six *Ayat* dedicated to the Names of Allah, His Attributes and His Qualities and His Kingdom. It then moves onto believing in ALLAH and His Messenger صلّى الله عليه و سلّم and spending from that which HE has provided you with. *In Surah Al-Saff*, after declaring the Perfection of ALLAH in the first verse, ALLAH refers to those who speak but do not act on what they say. There is the declaration of ALLAH's Greatness and then it is followed by criticism.

In this *Surah*, after ALLAH mentions HIMSELF, HE mentions His Messenger صلّى الله عليه و سلّم.

اَلْأُمِّيِّينَ - comes from the word ام which means mother. In other words your formal education is compared to that of a baby.

One of the addressees of this *Surah* is the Jews because the sacred day of the Jews was the Sabbath, a Saturday. Now ALLAH has made the sacred day, a Friday. This is a Madani *Surah*. One of the great criticisms the Jews had regarding the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was that he was from those who could not read. ALLAH reveals this *Ayah* in order to make it known that it is not an insult to send a Messenger who was unlettered but that it was an honor.

The next line does not just indicate that he reads the verses to them but that he teaches them the verses.

يَتْلُو inherently implies a miracle for the Prophet

صلّى الله عليه و سلّم and that is because he was reading the Quran on to the people. It is important to note that the

term reading is fundamentally different from speaking. When an individual reads, the author has his/her own style of composition. It becomes extremely distinct when one is reading to recognize that it is not their usual way of speaking.

The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم has been speaking to the Makkans for years and when revelation comes he begins to read because what he is saying is actually not his own words.

One of the citations of Ibn Ishaq claims that the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم said that "it as though the Quran was written onto my heart". In *Surah Al-Shu'arah* it states:

نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾

عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنْذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

[the *Ruh*, Jibrael came down with the Quran onto your heart - the Quran was revealed on to the heart of the

Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم]. We read with our eyes but the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم reads from his heart. The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was not shown a scroll and told to read. He was grabbed and shaken and told to read.

The Quran is ALLAH's Speech and is therefore different to the speech of the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم. This is evident when one compares the linguistic structure of the Quran to that of Hadith. The difference between Quran and Hadith is that the Quran is literally the word of ALLAH. Hadith is the teachings of ALLAH but the words are chosen by the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم. It too is Divine revelation but it is not the word of ALLAH. This also refers to Hadith Qudsi where the prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم paraphrases ALLAH.

In summarising the prophet's صلّى الله عليه و سلّم mission, ALLAH talks about the Quran and in doing so HE is cleansing them intellectually, giving them a sense of proportion, having them understand the ethical foundations of Islam and the justice of our *Deen*. For

example, the importance of doing right by people is such a great priority and that is then followed by the legal rulings in Islam. Today, within the Muslim world, the religious leaders are legally conscious (aware of *Halal* and *Haram*) but socially they are very unconscious. This is in the sense of justice to others and fulfilling the rights of others. When it comes to things such as *halal* meat, it becomes a big priority. How much does the Quran emphasise doing right by others compared references regarding dietary restrictions. This is not to say that dietary restrictions are unimportant but we have given emphasis to one thing and de-emphasised the other. There is a proportion the Quran gives in and of itself. It allows a balance. This is in reference to the intellectual aspect.

The third dimension that needs to be mentioned in regards to the intellectual side is that we are living in the world of multiple philosophies. The Quran is a response to intellectually hollow philosophies.

What does spiritual cleansing mean?

One may have anger problems, issues to do with laziness: character flaws. The Quran begins to hack away at those character flaws. If you have *Ghaflah* [you're heedless], or you have heartless prayer, when you start paying attention to the Quran and it is read onto you enough times, you start becoming conscious. It hits you; you can no longer ignore it. You may not experience the same effect every time but the frequency at which it occurs will increase due to an increase in exposure to the Quran. It continues to purify you. Human beings were given a void in their heart that could only be filled with revelation. People that do not have a spiritual exposure to the Quran fill that void with other things such as movies, music, video games, addictions, etc. In the religious tradition, when Quran becomes a distant thing – designated to be read only by scholars not regular Muslims, people gain their spiritual high through *Nasheeds*, other creative *Athkar* or through

other spiritual practices that are supposed to bring you closer to ALLAH. The highest form of spirituality given to the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was when he reached the highest level any human being has ever reached – God. He reached the *A'rsh* [throne] of ALLAH and was given *Salat*. A major proportion of *Salat* involves standing and reciting Quran. The most spiritual experience that is dictated by revelation is revelation itself in prayer. However, when that becomes empty that is when 'real *Dhikhr*' [remembrance] becomes popular because there is something missing in *Salat*. Muslims have underestimated the spiritual power of the Quran; that it does purify. Then you can supplement that with the *Athkar*, with a teacher that can teach you *Dua'a* [supplication] that are beautiful aspects of worship. At the heart of it all is the Quran because it is a form of purification.

The use of the وَ indicates there is a process involved; a progression from one thing to the next. It may be

simultaneous as well. Once they are purified, he teaches them the law [that which is *halal* and *haram*]. Why would people care about the law if they are not clean on the inside? They would not. There are many statements made today in which people believe *Sharia* Law is conducive to modern life or is too restrictive. When such comments are made it indicates that the *Tazkiya* has not yet occurred.

Nouman Ali Khan argues that when Quran is truly talked about, even if it is just a small amount, you don't have to have debates about that which is *halal* and that which is *haram*. You don't have to have debates about alcohol, pork and lottery tickets being sold in Muslim stores. They will leave it themselves. The Quran has that effect on people, we don't. Revelation has that power. It was the Quran that changed Umar رضي الله عنه who was a dangerous gangster before Islam. We underestimate the power the Quran has to change people. It is one of its miracles – it changes people.

Once you begin to apply the teachings of the Book then he teaches them wisdom.

حِكْمَة is not a guy who drops big lines on Twitter or uses really abstract terms (e.g. life is like a tree). حِكْمَة is beneficial knowledge and then acting upon that knowledge. It could be as simple as understanding that fire burns and therefore not touching it. The person who knows that fire burns has knowledge. The one who knows that fire burns and does not touch it has wisdom. It is possible to have knowledge but not have wisdom. You know something is not right but you still choose to do the wrong thing.

The use of حِكْمَة at the end is very powerful if you understand it in linguistic terms. There are people who learn and gain knowledge but they do not gain wisdom. They learn the law but not the wisdom. The Prophetic methodology was to teach the law and then teaching

people how to be able to live by it and to uphold it. The practical dimension of it is wisdom. Wisdom is not higher, or deeper levels of discussion, it is learning the knowledge and then living by it. When one makes a mistake – and as humans we are not immune from doing so because even the *Sahaba* made errors and they went to the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم who taught them what to do when such mistakes were made – *Istighfar*.

Imam Al-Shafi'i and Imam Malik said that **حِكْمَةَ** is *Sunnah*. The Book refers to the Quran and **حِكْمَةَ** refers to the *Sunnah*. **حِكْمَةَ** is the practical dimension and the practical teachings are the *Sunnah*.

These four things are the Prophet's صلّى الله عليه و سلّم formula given by ALLAH to turn a person around. We talk about turning our communities around and changing those who we give *Da'wah* to. This formula was able to turn the

Makkans around – the worst of the worst were changed by this. Every dimension of this becomes critical.

In today's society we have access to the information, but we have not yet created a program that focuses on the other three major aspects: to have the Quran being read, to be purified and to gain wisdom. This does not have to be an international program, but rather something that is localized where a small number of friends come together to learn and memorise Quran, their ideas have been cleansed together, they help each other reach a little more, and then they learn the book and encourage each other to act in the right way and to make the right decisions together. This is the power of community.

This Ayah has one of the most beautiful philosophical endings in the Quran. ALLAH talks about these people being turned around by the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم and then HE reveals that had you seen them prior to this change you would never have thought that they would

have been something amazing (you would not have seen potential in that person). ALLAH is teaching us that if this formula is followed, then HE can turn whomever HE wills around. We are not going to change anyone, but if you stick to this formula, then by means of this, ALLAH will turn people around that you would not even have imagined.

Ayah 3

وَءَاخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا۟ بِهِمْ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٣

Muhsin Khan

And He has sent him (Prophet Muhammad SAW) also to others among them (Muslims) who have not yet joined them (but they will come). And He (Allah) is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Nouman Ali Khan

And there are others [other than themselves/ the unlettered/ the Arabs of Makkah] that have not yet joined them. And HE is the Ultimate Authority, the All-Wise.

When this *Ayah* was revealed, the Ansar thought that it referred to them. However, the *Ayah* does not state that it is the people of Madinah, nor does it mention other

villages or tribes. It is used to refer to everyone apart from the original Makkans. Therefore, we are all considered to be among the others.

This revelation was revealed to **الْأُمِّيِّين**. As mentioned previously, the Jews were unimpressed because that was the entire reason they believed that these people should not have received revelation. They also believed that you can only have this revelation and guidance if you belonged to their particular ethnic group. It can't just be exported to others, it belongs to them, they own it. ALLAH reveals that on this occasion others will be included.

لَمَّا – not yet

ALLAH reveals that the *Ummah* will be multicultural and international. They have not yet joined them, but they will.

يَلْحَقُوا – suggests that one day we will be joined with them in *Jannah* [paradise] too. We have not yet joined them in Islam, and many of them have already made it to paradise, and by ALLAH's permission we will join them too.

Ayah 4

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤﴾

Muhsin Khan

That is the Grace of Allah, which He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of Mighty Grace.

Nouman Ali Khan

That is a favour of ALLAH. HE gives it to whoever HE wants. And ALLAH is the Owner of the Ultimate Favour.

Again this *Ayah* is a snub to those who believe revelation only comes to a select few.

What is the favour of ALLAH?

The Messenger صلّى الله عليه و سلّم is making an entire nation educated in the Book. An entire nation is getting cleansed and the *Ayat* are recited onto them.

Corruption exists within religion including social manipulation, economic manipulation; riots are caused by religious fanatics for their own gains. They use people like sheep. When a few are knowledgeable and most people rely on their knowledge people believe that they must be right. ALLAH is teaching us that there will be people of high caliber in terms of academic scholarship and teaching within Islam, but the average Muslim will at least be educated in the Quran. This is so they cannot be manipulated. This is a unique religious teaching. It did not exist before us in this way. The main obstacle to Islam for the Jewish community was the Rabbis, while for the Christians it was the Ministers who knew more than everyone else. They knew that this was true revelation but they could not bear the thought of telling their people. People cannot see it for themselves because they are not educated in revelation at a mass level. If their people were educated in revelation, then they would see it for what it

truly was. Islam was supposed to be different not just in its teachings but socially too, in that the average Muslim was supposed to be versed in the Quran and have exposure to it.

During the *Khilafah* of Umar رضي الله عنه, he would check if every *Masjid* and every group of people had teaching of Quran occurring or not. He saw that as a necessary piece of maintaining decent citizenship in the Muslim *Ummah*. We have to maintain the integrity of the *Ummah*, and the Quran is the way to achieve this.

Ayah 5

مَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ ٱلْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ
أَسْفَارًۢا ۚ بِئْسَ مَثَلُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ
ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ٥

Muhsin Khan

The likeness of those who were entrusted with the (obligation of the) Taurat (Torah) (i.e. to obey its commandments and to practise its legal laws), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey who

carries huge burdens of books (but understands nothing from them). How bad is the example (or the likeness) of people who deny the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah. And Allah guides not the people who are Zalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers, disbelievers, etc.).

Nouman Ali Khan

The example of those who were burdened with the Torah [they were burdened with the Torah], then they did not even carry it a little. Their example is like that of a donkey as it carries loads of books. How terrible the example of the nation that lied against the miracles [revelations] of ALLAH [ignoring revelation/not learning revelation] and ALLAH does not guide the wrongdoing nation.

حُمِّلُوا – [Hammala/yuhamilu/tahmil] They were burdened.

حمل على and تحميل – the second term is more powerful. Therefore, the Torah was a great burden – it was a major responsibility. In this sense the word is defined as holding a sense of responsibility.

The *mujarad* form 'حَمِلَ' was used here to imply that they were given a great responsibility but they failed to take care of even a little bit of it.

مَثَلُ – a means of giving the example of something but the example is not exactly the same. The use of كَمَثَلِ 'like' and مَثَل are synonymous. For example, you could not say 'the example of those who carried the Torah and then did not carry it… is the example of a donkey.' You also cannot say that 'the example of those who carried the Torah and then did not carry it… is the donkey.'

This is the form in rhetoric of distancing [tab'eid]. In other words the example of a donkey is being given but even then a donkey is still much better. The closest example would be the donkey. These people that did this are remotely similar to a donkey.

This is a reference to the gross incompetence and the gross misinterpretation of some people. ALLAH did not make reference to the Jews or to *Bani-Israel*. HE restricted this conversation to an act. They were people burdened with the responsibility of revelation, in this case, the Torah.

These people did not carry out this responsibility. It is these people that are remotely close, but far worse than even the donkey.

Bani-Israel in and of itself is not a curse word. It is an honourable name and carries the name of a Prophet within it. These people received more prophets than anyone else. They had a lot of failures but that does not take away the righteous among them. ALLAH compliments these righteous people in the Quran. For example, "How many Prophets alongside of whom the Rabbis fought." Rabbaniya – [*ya al-nisba*] People of the رب [Godly people] that aided the Prophets of *Israel*.

The modern political situation, has led us to become very anti-Semitic. This is grossly against the teachings of our *Deen*. It is a serious violation. We are supposed to be able to learn lessons from those who made mistakes in the past. There are people among *Bani-Israel* who made mistakes in

the past. The reason ALLAH mentions those who made mistakes among *Bani-Israel* in particular is because they are the closest [most similar] to us. Orthodox Judaism is incredibly similar to Islam.

The question then arises as to why the Quran says: "Sons of Israel, make mention of the favours I favoured upon you." ALLAH mentions a number of favours that HE bestowed upon *Bani-Israel*. The strange thing is that ALLAH says 'you' not 'them'. The people that ALLAH was referring to at the time were in Makkah or Medinah. ALLAH did not shade the Jewish tribes of Madinah with a cloud. It was the followers of Musa عليه سلام. Why does ALLAH group them together? The previous generation changed revelation and made mistakes but why should these people be blamed for that. The only reason this occurs is because there was a behaviour among the Jews of Madinah, in their reaction to the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was exactly the same attitude that their ancestors had – they

are being told they are behaving in the same manner as the previous generation. There is a parallel being made between the criminal element of *Bani-Israel* during the time of the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم and the criminal element of *Bani-Israel* in Musa عليه سلام time. In other words, they take pride in their history, yet are engaging in the same negative behaviour of their predecessors which is not something that they should take pride in. It is not all of *Bani-Israel*.

Secondly, ALLAH talks a lot about the history of *Bani-Israel*. There is no other nation whose history is discussed more in the Quran than *Bani-Israel*. One of the sources of their pride amongst the disbelievers in not accepting the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was a pride in their history.

Muslims also love their history – the Golden Age. We rarely discuss the not so proud moments of our history. Until we accept the embarrassing moments of our history,

and learn from them, we will not have learnt anything from *Bani-Israel*.

ALLAH is literally telling a nation who is proud of their history that they have a number of Prophets in their history but they have also made a number of mistakes too. Learn from those people.

As Muslims, we need to learn from our past and stop wishing that we were back in the 9th Century. Our history is not all rainbows and sunshine – where scholars would debate their opinions, where there were a great number of knowledgeable people and there was no fighting. That's not the entire case of Islamic history. We have had some extremely sad occasions in our history and we have to acknowledge them.

أَسْفَارًا – comes from **سفَر** which means travel. When you are reading your eye literally travels through the book. If it is a long journey, it is called **سِفَر**. Volumes of books are

called أَسْفَار because you are literally journeying through the text. You are navigating through it line by line.

In other words, there are many books on the shelf that you can claim ownership of but what exactly have you internalized from those books? Nothing, they are just burdens on your back. The donkey is being used as a means of humiliation. The donkey is being burdened by these books – it's a nuisance to carry these things. The corrupt among you change the real teachings because it is such a burden and you throw it behind your backs. In this *Surah*, it is on the back of the donkey and in *Surah Al-Baqarah*, they threw it behind their backs as though they don't even know. In other words, they threw the truth behind their back as though they don't even know.

There is a significant population from the Muslim community who claim to be loyal and genuine to the Quran but know nothing of it. When people are distant

from the Book, they start making assumptions about it and are comfortable in doing so. Literally, the Book is on the back shelf or in the dashboard of the car; that's the only place it belongs. Do not bring the Quran up in conversation if you have no idea what it contains.

Having the Quran in your possession and not taking the time to learn it is a denial of revelation; it is lying against the *Ayat* of ALLAH.

What were the wrongs committed by that nation?

They were given revelation and favoured more than any other nation. They were required to represent the teachings of God more than anyone else so that the world could see what guidance looks like. When they do not live up to it, then they are the ultimate deniers of revelation. The people that are more exposed to the truth become more responsible for it. For example, if the Muslims are more exposed – we are claimed to be the believers in this

Book – if we do not represent its teachings, then we are the most responsible.

Do not worry about whether some non-Muslims such as Mother Theresa or Lady Diana will enter hell or paradise, we as Muslims have a problem. Are we going to heaven? Take out the word Bani-Israel in the Quran and replace it with Muslims and you will notice that it is applicable to our community too.

Ayah 6

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوٓا۟ إِن زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ لِلَّهِ مِن دُونِ
ٱلنَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا۟ ٱلْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ٦

Muhsin Khan

Say (O Muhammad SAW): "O you Jews! If you pretend that you are friends of Allah, to the exclusion of (all) other mankind, then long for death if you are truthful."

Nouman Ali Khan

Those of you that have been engaged in Judaism, if you have the confident assumption that you are the friends [close friends/protected friends] of ALLAH as opposed to all other people, then wish for death if in fact you are truthful.

هَادُوا – engaged in Judaism. The verb for Judaism is **هَادُوا**

Why would you wish for death?

If you are guaranteed paradise then what are you doing on Earth. You have to pay the bills here, you age, you get sick, you have to eat food and go to the bathroom, you sweat and you need to take showers. So what are you doing here? If you are guaranteed paradise then you should not be interested in *Dunya* anymore. Why do they not wish for death or pray for it?

In Islam we have been taught many *Du'a* [supplication] about death one of which is: "Give me death amongst the righteous." When you make a *Du'a* it is *fi'3il amr* – in this case, 'give death to us.' Again there are a large number of Muslims who are completely confident that they will not face punishment in the hereafter. They use the hadith in which the Prophet **صلّى الله عليه و سلّم** said that "whoever says *la illaha illallah* enters paradise." Is this the only thing the

Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم has ever said? How did the companion to whom the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was speaking to regarding this, take this statement? Did he believe that he was guaranteed paradise and therefore commit sins? What do the Quran and other Hadiths say about this? You cannot take one statement disregard everything else. This is similar to the nation that "took part of the Book and neglected the other parts of it," or "took part of the law and left the other parts," or "took the Quran and tore it to pieces" as mentioned in the Quran.

Ayah 7

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُۥٓ أَبَدًۢا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٧

Muhsin Khan

But they will never long for it (death), because of what (deeds) their hands have sent before them! And Allah knows well the Zalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers, disbelievers, etc.).

Nouman Ali Khan

They are not going to be wishing for it ever because of what their hand has already sent forward. And ALLAH is Fully Knowledgeable of people who do wrong.

This is referring to the investments they have already made; the things they have already done. They are aware of what they have done and therefore do not wish for death. It also implies that all the investments they have made are in regards to a better future in *Dunya*. Why would you want to leave if all of your investments are tied right here? When a person makes an investment, they are anticipating and very patiently waiting for the day when a return on their investment arrives. If all your investments are for this world, then you are just waiting for that day to come.

Our *Deen* is about investing in *Dunya* for yourself but more so investing in your *Akhira*. ALLAH does not allow us to do one or the other; we must combine these two things. For example, if a person earns a *Halal* income, then they have invested in their *Dunya* and *Akhira* at the same

time. They have done both. Giving *Sadaqa* [charity] is actually an investment in the *Dunya* and *Akhira*. The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم told us that "Money does not decrease when you give in charity." If you give charity, then it will be refunded by ALLAH guaranteed in this world. You have also deposited it into an interest *Halal Akhira* account that has deposited at least 700 times and ALLAH adds that HE will multiply on top of that for whoever HE wants:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

[Surah Al-Baqarah – 2:261]

It is not literally 700 times - this is an infinite reward and yet on top of that God will reward some people even further. Our definition of infinite is not the same as what is

infinite to God. ALLAH's rewards are beyond our imagination.

When we invest and save in *Dunya* is it in danger? Our savings in *Dunya* are in danger. You can save your money as money but your account is only so much FDIC insured. You can save your money and turn it into gold or coins and place it in a vault but how secure is that vault? You can invest your money in property and then have it destroyed by floods or an earthquake. However, when we deposit our money into an *Akhira* account, it is guaranteed. There is only one threat to your *Akhira* account and that is that you show off or you mention to any human being how you gave that money. This is called اَلْمَنُّ وَالْأَذَىٰ.

Ayah 8

قُلْ إِنَّ ٱلْمَوْتَ ٱلَّذِى تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ مُلَـٰقِيكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ
عَـٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَـٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

Muhsin Khan
Say (to them): "Verily, the death from which you flee will surely meet you, then you will be sent back to (Allah), the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you what you used to do."

Nouman Ali Khan

Tell them, "No doubt the death that you people are running away from, then absolutely it is bound to meet you [it is on the way to meeting you/it is meeting you]. Then you will all be returned [taken back] to the Knower of the unseen and the seen and HE will thoroughly inform you of all the things that you used to do.

مُلَاقِيكُمْ

Laqa/yulaqi/liqa'un/mulaqatun – bound to meet you. This is a *mufa'ala* in irregular *mufa'ala* form.

There are three *Ayat* dedicated to death. We have *Bani-Israel* who don't carry their book and when they don't carry their book, they wish to live forever. They run away from death and do not wish for it. ALLAH says that they will face it and they will be brought before ALLAH and brought to trial. There is a link ALLAH makes with not having a connection with the Torah and then being afraid of death. There is a relationship between not being tied to

revelation and developing a fear of death. The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was afraid the *Ummah* will become weak and that other nations will eat from us like wolves. The *Sahaba* asked him if the Muslims would be few in number. He replies in the negative but claims that they will have weakness. The only way to alleviate that weakness is through remembering death frequently and reciting Quran. In this *Surah*, the Jews had a superficial relationship with their Book and they were running from death. The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم informs us that we will face this weakness too.

Ayah 9

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَوٰةِ مِن يَوۡمِ ٱلۡجُمُعَةِ فَٱسۡعَوۡاْ
إِلَىٰ ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ وَذَرُواْ ٱلۡبَيۡعَۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ إِن كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ ٩

Muhsin Khan

O you who believe (Muslims)! When the call is proclaimed for the Salat (prayer) on the day of Friday (Jumu'ah prayer), come to the remembrance of Allah [Jumu'ah religious talk (Khutbah) and Salat (prayer)] and leave off business (and every other thing), that is better for you if you did but know!

Nouman Ali Khan

Those of you who claim to believe, when the call is made for prayer from a part of the day on Friday. Then rush to the remembrance of ALLAH and leave business [sales]. That is better for you if in fact you know.

Salat Al-Juma'ah is being mentioned strategically. How does one remember death and what connects an individual to revelation? Individually one is meant to recite Quran and make *Salat*, but on a weekly basis ALLAH forced us to hold a convention. HE institutionalised a convention – a convention that does not require flyers to be sent out, nor does it require a Face book event page to be constructed, nor do you have to make invitations through phone calls. They will show up on their own – the religious and not so religious individuals, the knowledgeable and the not so knowledgeable, the practising individuals and the ones who are not so practising in their *Deen*, the young and the old. They will arrive for the twenty minute *Khutbah* and *Salat*. Some may arrive late, others early, but they will all show up, in more numbers than any other event.

Every single week the *Ummah* holds a meeting – it is called *Salat Al-Juma'ah*. No other nation on Earth has a congregation like this on a weekly basis. Not all churches are packed every single week yet in Muslim countries all the *Masajid* are full every single Friday. Regardless of the *Khatib*, or the topic being presented, people will continue to show up because it is *Juma'ah*.

This Ayah defines *Juma'ah*.

مِنْ – [*Tab'eidiya*] a part of the day of Friday. This means that you do not have to give up your entire Friday in the way that the Jews had to give up Saturday entirely.

الْجُمُعَةِ – from **جَمَعَ**/yajma'oo/jam'an – to gather

يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ – literally means the day of gathering. This is another reason why on Judgement Day we will be gathered on a Friday. Every *Juma'ah* is supposed to be a reminder of Judgement Day. One of the names of Judgement Day is

يَوْمِ الْجَمْعِ. Our congregations are a gathering. Our gathering is a reminder of a much larger gathering which is the Day of Judgement.

There are rehearsals for Judgement Day. *Salat* is a rehearsal for Judgement Day at a smaller level. Friday prayers are a rehearsal for Judgement Day at larger level whilst Hajj is a rehearsal at the largest level. The religious spiritual exercises we have in Islam are all tied to Judgement Day. The subject mentioned in the previous *Ayat* was in relation to running away from death. The Muslim attends *Juma'ah* in order to be reminded of death and the Day of Judgement and this is achieved just by the fact that he is gathered there. Reminders of the Day of Judgement are embedded and installed into the mechanics of our religion.

فَاسْعَوْا – Rush. In other words make it a priority. You are not being asked for the entire day; only a part of it. Why would you take it easy when the nation before was given

the entire day to give worship. You are being asked for so much less so why would you be lacking in regards to it?

The entire *Juma'ah* from beginning to end is described not as rushing towards the *Khutbah* or the gathering but to rush towards the remembrance of ALLAH. The essence of Friday Prayer is remembering ALLAH. This means that as you are rushing towards Friday Prayer, you should be engaged in extra *Dhikr* [remembrance] of ALLAH. Ones intention for walking into *Juma'ah* is not to be entertained, or given new information; ALLAH is telling you that *Juma'ah* is about remembering ALLAH, together as a people.

In modern day society, many Muslims ask what the time for *Juma'ah* is. They have a casual attitude towards *Juma'ah* believing that they can arrive late as long as they make the final ten minutes of the *Khutbah* and *Salat*. The mad rush after *Juma'ah* is a result of it entering people's lunch break. There is a mad rush to leave the *Masjid*, yet people are

standing outside and chatting for long periods of time. No-one was rushing in to chat with ALLAH but people have a lot of time after to chat with each other. This day was supposed to be about ALLAH. This is not to say that you cannot socialise with people on Friday, however, if you are going to do that, at least give ALLAH His due. Arrive early, dress your best and recite Quran in the morning – make it an event.

Juma'ah is supposed to be a rehearsal for Judgement Day itself; it is the day we are going to face ALLAH. When ALLAH talked about *Juma'ah*, the conversation preceding it was about death. Every *Juma'ah* is supposed to be an extra reminder about death. You should go out of your way to remind yourself about death. It is a *Sunnah* to recite *Surah Al-Kahf* on Friday and it begins by mentioning how the world will be reduced to nothing:

وَإِنَّا لَجَٰعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيۡهَا صَعِيدٗا جُرُزًا ٨

Muhsin Khan
And verily! We shall make all that is on it (the earth) a bare dry soil (without any vegetation or trees, etc.).

That is what you start your Friday with – the world will come to an end. If the world will come to an end, what make you think that you won't come to an end? It is a mindset.

وَذَرُوا – literally means sales. It is the hardest part to leave in a business. If you are writing cheques to your employees and you are required to leave, you will do so. If you are in the middle of work or a project and it is boring, you will leave. If you are in a meeting that is dragging on, you will leave early for *Juma'ah.* However, a customer is hard to leave.

Ayah 10

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةُ فَٱنتَشِرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ
وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Muhsin Khan
Then when the (Jumu'ah) Salat (prayer) is finished, you may disperse through the land, and seek the Bounty of Allah (by working, etc.), and remember Allah much, that you may be successful.

Nouman Ali Khan

And when the prayer is done with [when the prayer has been executed], you may spread out in the land and pursue from ALLAH's favours, and remember ALLAH a lot, so that you may attain success.

In the modern world, the most unproductive time for employees and businesses is Friday afternoon, after 2:00pm. Although work finishes at 5:00pm, people switch to vacation mode by 2:00pm. They are already thinking about the movie they are going to watch, or the party they are going to – it's Friday [TGIF: Thank God it's Friday]. The Muslims are being told that *Juma'ah* is over and to get back to work. ALLAH is specifically offering us an incentive that after *Juma'ah* if you pursue the favour of ALLAH [HE highlights the pursuit of HIS favour at that particular time] there is some *Barakah* [blessing] in it. You will achieve more in those few hours than at any other time. Everyone else has checked out, but you check in.

However, that does not mean that you become worldly which is why ALLAH then says "And remember ALLAH a lot."

Ayah 11

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكُوكَ قَائِمًا ۚ قُلْ مَا عِندَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ
مِّنَ اللَّهْوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

Muhsin Khan

And when they see some merchandise or some amusement [beating of Tambur (drum) etc.] they disperse headlong to it, and leave you (Muhammad SAW) standing [while delivering Jumu'ah's religious talk (Khutbah)]. Say "That which Allah has is better than any amusement or merchandise! And Allah is the Best of providers."

Nouman Ali Khan

And when they saw business or entertainment, they broke off towards it [they rush towards it] and they left you standing [the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم]. Tell them what ALLAH has is better than entertainment and better than business. And ALLAH is the Best of All Providers.

The last *Ayah* of this *Surah* is very heavy. It is in regards to an incident that occurred during the time of the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم. The Muslims are a mix of people that have

been with him for a long time. There are some new companions including young people. This incident occurs in Madinah when the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم was giving his sermon. They do not realize how important it is to attend the entire sermon. The specific injunctions about not talking during the *Khutbah* or not leaving the *Khutbah* [the*khutbah* being a part of *Salat*] has not yet been internalized. This is early on – an early inauguration of the Friday Prayer.

At the time, there is a trade caravan [nowadays would be similar to expos] passing by while *Juma'ah* is occurring. There is commotion with the arrival of the caravan.

Here we have two types of people: business people who see this as an opportunity for networking and making sales and those who have no purpose in life and therefore attend such events as a means of entertainment. The first category of people is mentioned first by ALLAH because they are attracted towards the caravan for business purposes. After

seeing people gathering at the site, those who have no purpose will also go and see what is happening. The next wave of crowd comes not for business but for entertainment. The first draw was business and the second draw was for entertainment.

انْفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا and **انْفَض مِنْ** – there are two expressions used. For example, in *Surah Ale-Imran* we learn they would have broken off from you [the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم]:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

Muhsin Khan

And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).

Infidad is used when glass breaks. When glass breaks and pieces shatter and break off from the original. When glass breaks you cannot put it back together. In other words, you break off in a way that the gathering that was originally there can no longer be recovered.

انْفَضُّوا إِلَيْهَا – instead of **سعوا إِلَيْهَا** or **اسرعوا إِلَيْهَا** – they rush towards it. ALLAH uses **انْفَضُّوا** to indicate that they broke the gathering of *Juma'ah* and they disrupted it in a way that it could not be recovered. We are learning that disturbing *Juma'ah* takes very little and when people start walking away from it, it's an irreparable distraction. For example, when people start walking out of a speech in large numbers is it not distracting to the one who is speaking and to those who are trying to listen?

The beginning of the *Surah* mentions the four things the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم does: **يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ**

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ. All of these four things come together in *Juma'ah*. They are all unified in *Juma'ah*. The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم is reciting the *Ayat* on to them, it's a cleansing experience, he teaches them something new and gives them a reminder. The fact that they are attending *Juma'ah* and obeying ALLAH at that time is a حِكْمَةَ in and of itself. They are fulfilling that entire legacy every Friday. The Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم has a strategy, a mission that he was given and how to execute it. One of the pillars of that execution is *Juma'ah* itself. Every Friday *Khutbah* is extremely important in every community. It is a great *Ammanah* [trust]. This is the *Surah* about *Juma'ah* and it should therefore dictate our mentality towards *Juma'ah*.

Unfortunately, one of the most neglected responsibilities in our communities is that the appearance and decorative features of the *Masjid* [i.e chandeliers are being imported from Italy, the carpets are being imported from Persia, the

marble is being imported, the parking lot has been revamped four times over] are given greater importance than investing in the *Khateeb* itself. There is no investment in the *Khutbah* itself. The *Khutbah* is more about the organisation or politics than it is about ALLAH's Book. It is a violation of the sacred responsibility that we all have.

In the beginning of the *Ayah*, business was referred to first and then entertainment is mentioned. By the end of the *Ayah*, entertainment is referred to first and then business is mentioned. In this particular incident which occurred, the business people would be interested in the trade caravan first and secondly it holds an element of entertainment. The entire essence of *Juma'ah* is to remember ALLAH. In remembering ALLAH you have two distractions: you are busy at work or busy entertaining yourself. The wider culprit is entertainment. Some people are busy at work but all people are distracted by entertainment. We went from a specific incident where the bigger culprit was business and

by the end of the *Ayah* we move to a universal problem. Entertainment is the more universal of the two and is therefore mentioned first.

They left the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم behind – the best *Khateeb* on the planet. However, ALLAH does not say 'tell them that what the Prophet has is better than your entertainment or business.' Rather ALLAH says what HE has is better. This is great wisdom by ALLAH because it is not the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم who will always be giving the *Khutbah*.

What provision has ALLAH mentioned the most in this *Surah*? It is revelation and the Prophet's company صلّى الله عليه و سلّم, what he offers you and what he does for you. He offers you the *Ayat* of revelation, he offers you cleansing and he teaches you the Book and wisdom. That is the ultimate provision – guidance.

In the beginning of this *Surah* ALLAH mentioned the methodology of the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم [the four processes]. ALLAH then mentions that when you don't execute this methodology, the community becomes hollow and therefore carries the Book on their backs and become worldly and are afraid of death. Finally ALLAH mentions that the way to maintain the spirit of the strategy of the Prophet صلّى الله عليه و سلّم is through the institution of *Juma'ah* Prayers. These three things are logically connected to one another.